The
COMMONWEAL

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Editors: EDWARD SKILLIN, JR.
PHILIP BURNHAM

HARRY LORIN BINSSE, *Managing Editor;* C. G. PAULDING, *Literary Editor;* JOHN C. CORT, *Associate Editor;* John BRUBAKER, *Advertising Manager.*

Five Peace Treaties

WE HAVE FIVE peace treaties now; Mr. Byrnes signed four of them—we were not at war with Finland—and then went away; probably the governments of the nations for which they are intended will sign them sooner or later—and then we will be officially at peace with Italy, Rumania, Bulgaria, Hungary and Finland. After that we will have to start thinking about being at peace where it really matters.

We began making peace where peace was not too difficult to make; what one had to worry about was how to punish people who had helped Germany; how to get indemnities of one sort or another—preferably indemnities that would be worthwhile getting. So Italy lost colonies, islands to Greece, islands to Yugoslavia, Trieste to a Governor; Finland gave to Russia what Russia insisted on having, and you could find out, easily enough we suppose, what Hungary gave to whom, what happened to Rumania and what the people interested in them did to the Bulgars.

So that it looks as if the affairs of these five countries were settled, the people will be sorry for one or another of them according to their taste for the north of Europe, the middle or the south. By that entirely personal standard we would have a great deal to say about the treaty which is to be imposed on Italy. But the question is not one of sentiment.

The question remains a fundamental one of intention. Are these treaties to be considered as a profit and loss accounting of the war? Or are they acts which will serve to build a peaceful world? In theory they are supposed to be both, and the theory seems to us an unworkable one. Theoretically you can have it both ways at once; practically it is obvious of course that you are going to have it both ways at once—that is, you are sure to have it the first way, with the profits of victory, the losses of defeat; and you are going to be told that it is the second way also, and that these treaties are inspired by justice and the desire to create the conditions of justice that will install and guarantee peace between the conquerors and the conquered. You are going to be told that these emotional words are to disappear as soon as the peace treaties are ratified. Meanwhile things are bound to be mixed. and it is just as well to put some hope in what you are told; it is a good thing, after that, to try to get what you are told you are going to get.

The treaties are mixed in their intentions and in their effects. There is the intention which proceeds from, and is bound to the war, and the intention which looks to, and implements the future. There are the effects which will serve the future, and the effects which will work against the hopes of the future, the hope of peace in the future. For some time, they will remain inextricably mixed. But not forever.

There will be a time when one of these intentions will be stronger than the other. Because they still are mixed there are things we do that make no sense. When we punish Italy and simultaneously make a loan to Italy, that makes no sense. But this is the way things will be for quite a time. We will be making it hard for countries to live, and at the same time we will know that it is supremely important that they live, and so we punish them and help them, mistrust them and hope in them—all at once. But the time may come, if we force it to come, when the desire to work sensibly, whole- and not half-heartedly, for peace will dominate.

That is why these treaties which have been so carefully worked out—worked out with such long difficulty because they represent a conflict in intention—should never be thought of as unchangeable documents. When the desire for peace predominates, these treaties will have to be amended; when the nations which impose them start amending them we will know, everywhere in the world, that the nations have started to believe that peace is possible.

These five treaties are not the treaties that matter the most; it is the German treaty that matters the most. It will no doubt be prepared under

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the influence of the same mixed motives, the same intentions; it will contradict itself. That is inevitable. We must wait—and all the peoples everywhere are waiting—until our intentions are singly and clearly for peace.

In the Interest of Good Business

AS THE VICTORIOUS Republicans begin to throw their weight around in Congress, they are casting about to undo what they can of their predecessors' most hated work. A big budget and big taxes are high on their chopping list, along with sections of New Deal labor legislation. Next in priority appear to be many of the tariff reductions resulting from the Reciprocity Trade Agreements Act and its subsequent extensions. It is estimated that since 1934 tariff duties have been reduced in one way or another on some two-thirds of our dutiable import items.

Strongly in support of these Washington representatives are all sort of business groups. At the recent hearings of the Committee for Reciprocity Information business executives almost to a man refused to concede some of the protection for their products in United States tariff schedules for the sake of forwarding the government objective of multi-lateral expanding world trade. Most of them are apparently still yearning for that long lost "business as usual."

Opposing this formidable phalanx there is the Truman Administration, specifically committed to carrying on, and in particular the State Department. In the postwar months the United States, under Democratic Party auspices, has been taking the lead in working toward the freer, multi-lateral trade sorely needed by the peoples of the world. The aim has been eventually to create an International Trade Organization. A first preparatory meeting has been held in London, a second is scheduled for Geneva in April, while the actual agreements are slated to be reached at the final conference late next fall. Much progress has been registered and Britain is playing ball, but the whole program is threatened with collapse by the new domestic developments.

Some observers hold that it is American isolationism's last trench, since the political head in the sand is no longer even temporarily practicable. But be that as it may, Senator Vandenberg on January 19 went so far as to attempt an untenable distinction between foreign policy (politics) and trade policy (economics). He wants to continue the first, question the second. Representative Jenkins of Ohio has introduced the absurd resolution that further American trade negotiations be suspended until Congress can give the matter further study — a step which would wreck the aforementioned Geneva conference and everything from there on.

It is no use blinking some of the complexities raised by higher tariff politicians and interested business men. To achieve multi-lateral expanding international trade in a world where bi-lateral treaties concluded under political pressure form a substantial part of the economic landscape will be extremely difficult. The plea that American negotiators have a certain number of advisors representing business interests would seem reasonable, although it has been the practice in concluding the reciprocal trade agreements to give American commodity interests ample opportunity to file briefs on projected tariff schedules.

But in all these complexities certain elements stand out clearly. Historically the reciprocal trade program has proved itself both based on adequate study and beneficial to American business. Prosperity abroad is essential to American prosperity. The only hope for the continuance of a modified capitalist system is expanding domestic and international trade. War-torn countries cannot contribute the share that is required for international prosperity unless the United States supplies loans, credits and wholehearted leadership in the revival of world trade.

Demands for further congressional study, opposition to foreign subsidies, insistence that Congress ratify every individual trade agreement or that schedules be revised strictly in accord with foreign production costs are all, in effect, obstructionist at the very moment world trade most needs to go ahead. Short-sighted business men and politicians banded together can at this juncture work irreparable harm. It all underlines the importance of rallying those forces convinced of the immediate urgency and long-range need of an American reciprocal trade program aimed at worldwide recovery and an ever freer and expanding interchange of useful goods and services. No one should insist that here is the only formula required for assisting the peoples of the world back on their own feet; but a reciprocal trade policy is one well-proved device that must not be cast aside for short-sighted private interests.

Coalition Government and Responsibility

WE ARE NOT SOLD on coalition governments, nor even, as a general proposition on coalition policies. There is the first worry that various groups coalescing in the coalition may be insincere in proclamations of unity and may be only trying to use their position in order to advance highly non-coalition ends. The history of "united fronts" is not re-assuring, and the Labour Party experience in England between the wars showed that tories just as well as communists can manipulate coalition set-ups in more than one partisan direction.

The technique of coalition government tends to hide from citizens the responsibility for policy

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and action. For instance, how much of what the French Government has been doing and not doing this past year has been the responsibility of the Socialist, the Communist and the MRP parties? There is simply no good way to know.

A coalition government ought to be a very *ad hoc* proposition, functioning most clearly to perform a very definite and concrete public service, such as, for instance, when necessary, winning a war. (The US didn't need one this last time out; the UK evidently did.)

Almost unanimous agreement among the people on a policy is needed to make a coalition effort to carry it out justifiable. And that policy should set a program for dealing with the particular problem which everybody agrees is overwhelmingly the most important one which at the time confronts the country and government. In spite of Senator Vandenberg, in spite of the publicity about the General Marshall appointment, we feel definitely skeptical about the existence of such unanimity in this country on international policy—either its importance to American life or its content. Until, indeed, we can decide upon and elaborate for action much more widely agreed upon "principles of national policy" (perhaps American interpretation of the Monroe Policy is one "principle" accepted; perhaps the idea that no single great power should control the eastern side of the Atlantic, nor the western side of the Pacific should be two more)—until then it seems quite possible that a bit more "partisanship" in approaching foreign affairs and the problems of conducting the government would be healthier in the long run than more immediate, superficial, and questionable protestations of coalition policies and intentions.

Education and the Money Equation

THE WAR PERIOD brought into uncomfc rtably bright light many failings of American education—along with, it seems rarely enough noted, many solid accomplishments. Nearly all the soldiers could, after all, read and write; almost too many of them took to driving jeeps and handling other mechanical devices with disconcerting nonchalance; millions of them could rush through quite tough training courses and come out adequately adept at specialized operations and well enough grounded in special knowledges to swing a very big and very complicated war. And so on up the line to the sinister scientists of Oak Ridge. American education proved to be no worthless protective device.

The failures were mostly more subtly betrayed. The millions of young people discovered to be unsuitable for the Army in the first place, more for psychological than for any other causes, pointed to terribly bad conditions, in part educational. The incapacity of officers and men to appreciate new experiences (to travel intelligently, to learn, to enjoy themselves in more civilized fashions) when they were free in the American and Pacific and especially European theaters, pointed to thoroughly bad education. The overall vagueness of American ideology during the war and the particular lack of political, intellectual and moral "orientation" within the armed forces emphasized our failures in intellectual and philosophical upbringing.

Criticisms such as these are very general and perhaps not practical enough to do anything with. Disturbingly, they don't have very direct connection with dollars and cents or school building programs or super-educational equipment. Except, of course, that school budgets are one of the important influences in attracting and keeping the best possible teachers — a powerful indirect connection.

The money problems of education are the ones easiest to deal with, and, even though not most fundamental, they appear to be the ones the country is first attacking. (That is, beyond the emergency consideration of inadequate pay for too many teachers, which legitimately obtains a priority.) There is a powerful trend toward a simplicist solution of the "education problem" by simply a big federal appropriation. Fragmentary reports from the meeting of the Association of American Colleges encouragingly indicate that the members of that group are not plunging after that mechanical way out. They sent to a further-study-committee proposals for federal aid to primary and secondary public education and for federal scholarships for able students. The big issue (for a college association) of over-all federal aid for higher education was at the end sidestepped, or delayed.

Federal scholarships were favored by some speakers and advocated as better than outright grants to the states. But at least one speaker, fearing even that type of national assistance, said that if colleges are to remain independent they must rely on a diversified, independent source of income. Federal aid "almost certainly will mean the disappearance . . . of the independent, privately-financed liberal arts college." Why scholarships could not furnish a useful bit of diversification without capturing the colleges is not reported, and that system seems to us the most promising one advocated to bring national aid. Excellent sounding resolutions were aimed at building up "humanistic" and "social" studies in order to bring about a better balance between technical and natural sciences, on the one side, and "the studies which assist morality and an understanding of man and his society" on the other. If the colleges are going to be worth no matter how much or how little money they get, clearly they must work in that direction.

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The Articulate Job Seeker

James Montgomery

I AM UNEMPLOYED in this winter of 1946-1947 and I find it not pleasant. Others have been unemployed before me — millions of them through the thirties, often hungry but meekly waiting for that "break" which was provided eventually only by the jackboots of Hitler's armies. It is convenient to forget that. It is convenient to forget that just prior to the beginning of the war there were still about 9,000,000 unemployed. Today, in our justified fascination with the atomic bomb and the stirring beginnings of world government we forget that unemployment is still the number one economic threat to our institutional way of life. In this economic heyday we have only 3,000,000 or so of unemployed, a matter not pressing enough for general consideration.

But I am one of them and I think about it. I used to think about it before, a great deal, academically. I had a friend who was a radical rebel, a full-time sneerer. He scorched, not only what was glibly called the "unemployment situation" but the whole historical and contemporary structure of society plus the various "palliative" efforts launched to improve it. He was possessed of "ideas more powerful than armies or barricades" that he was convinced would sweep the whole caboodle of our commercial, economic, and financial institutions *along with* communism, fascism, and democracy, on to the junk heap of history.

Naturally as he was a close friend I was influenced to some extent. It was not a religious revelation; it bowed to no god except the god of human wellbeing in the here and now. I stumbled, sometimes soared in the ways of revolutionary social thought, but my clay feet always came back to the ground. Then he died.

I looked on the world again and his ideas suddenly became dull and futile and I put them away almost for good. At the sobering age of thirty-three I decided to give the private enterprise system a chance—a chance through the channels of free economic enterprise to provide me and mine with the refinements and luxuries which I had gawked at with the passionate longing of the chaste, for I had half scorned Mammon and his affiliates.

So I am giving it a fair trial and I am equipped to do so. I must continue to do so, for four hungry mouths demand it. But in the process, the question is being enlarged again, not by theory this time but by the impact of personal fact: Does the system of free enterprise, as my friend used to say, stink? There are so many losers!

I knew that and now I know that I may become one of them.

The process of acquiring the "revolutionary," the "to-hell-with-the-system" frame of mind is being forcibly impressed upon me. Perhaps it does not affect the others the same way; perhaps I have a mind attuned to ideological undertows.

★

Every Monday morning I take my place in line in a gigantic barn-like armory. The wide floor is covered with long lines of people shuffling quietly toward the wickets where the checks are handed out. All day long these lines move forward, day after day, in Seattle, in New York, in Chicago, in Dallas, all over the nation. Day after day thousands of clerks hand out the checks which have been punched and printed on batteries of machines.

I've never been on a dole before. I held out for four months before I yielded to the 52-20 club. Although my friend had previously scorned such "palliatives," I see it as a valuable insurance that will have to be amplified, extended and simplified in order to preserve some measure of the privileges of private enterprise.

After this I go to the U.S. Employment Service where I sit one hour, two hours, three hours to be interviewed by an interviewer who knows that he has no job for me and might just as well wave me off at the start. But he's got to eat, too, and he has to initial my little card every week.

And as I wait and wait and wait something comes and whispers over my shoulder. Maybe it is the Apocalyptic Horseman himself. Maybe it is the ghost of my departed friend. Perhaps it is my own embryo thought patterns. Or maybe just the look on the face of the man behind me.

We'll say it is the Horseman himself — the gigantic mass fact of unemployment.

He insinuates a startling and shocking idea: That the next time there are millions upon millions of them they won't wait meekly. They will act.

"Somebody will have to get crackin' but fast!" growls the Horseman in my ear. He is a modernistic fellow.

His rasping voice goes on to tell me, inescapably bringing up the inescapable ideas, to pass along a solemn, finger-wagging warning to "the

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whole of the American business system: to its Trumans, Deweys, Henry Wallaces; its Luces, Harry Bridgeses, Fulton Lewis juniors; its Gabriel Heatters, John L. Lewises, John Foster Dulleses; its Eric Johnsons, Watsons, duPonts, Sloans; and all its host of legalistic mouthpieces, philistines, gently prodding liberals; and its plain, ordinary brown-nosers." A warning "to beware!" he says. He disconcertingly scrambles them all. A coarse fellow, as well.

I hunch my shoulders quickly and shuffle forward. Defeatism, I think.

"Last time those unemployed were not articulate in the main and they did not act. Next time they will not be articulate either, but they may move in a measureless, brainless, overwhelming wave—not led by Moscow gold, nor restrained by Vatican prayers or Wall Street exhortations."

Sheer stuff and nonsense. I have a sort of choking in my throat. I am thinking of my new, personal ambitions which are dependent upon the ever-expanding continuance of prosperity. Talk like that, indeed, is heresy. What if the Horseman were right? And they, the myriad faces floating around me, could not be bought off short of their full longing for economic security and abundance, not caring whether these could be provided within the framework of capitalistic, democratic enterprise, but only that they be provided?

In such a situation would they be simply Americans, unorganized, unpolitic, ideologically innocent, moving aimlessly in history's biggest mob scene, or would they be the puppets of an engineered revolt? Does the question matter if the sharpness of the need called for crude social surgery — the emasculation of all the hotly defended social privileges implicit in our system?

★

I had a neat set of methodical, modest plans when I came out of the army in the spring of 1946. Those plans absorbed me, but something happened to them.

First I was going to have a little vacation. Then I was going to get a job that would pay a decent income. I naïvely thought that about $200 a month would do. I had hoped to fall into my old work and settle down in suburban comfort.

Then the dream would start coming true! The dream was a slick little modern house with a panoramic view, and big plate glass windows, and an outdoor patio. Around it would be about five acres of ground which over the years we would gradually develop with fruit trees, berry crops, our own vegetables, some animals; not a farm, just a place that would reduce the cost of living and make pleasant living possible. Our plans were very modest. About $5,000 and the muscular sweat of our brow would create this decent haven. And of course a GI loan would be its foundation.

This is where the hollow laughs begin. In the first place there has been no job. No job; no GI loan. In the second place there is no five acres with a modest house for a top of $5,000. Five acres of stumps or brush with a shack, yes. But for anything like that there is no GI loan, even with a job. We began to revise our plans downward, our plans and our price.

This process is typical.

We began to think in terms of a shack and the brush and prices beyond our means, but we might just as well have glorified our dreams to the $30,000 level because of that one, inexorable, blank wall fact: No job; no loan.

It was a stalemate—a commonplace and even humorous thing to read about but depressing and bitter discouragement to those who experience it.

And so like about 3,000,000 others we moved in with our parents and there we are, patiently and even fondly getting along with each other; but still it isn't home and it can't go on forever. And now the family is divided because the erstwhile breadwinner must live in another city to seek employment.

Well all right! I'm a long hair. I've criticized for years. Then I turn around suddenly and embrace the object of my attack. I want it to start paying off immediately; I'm surprised, peeved, hurt, because the fatted calf is not produced.

No. I am working along the time-honored paths of freedom of opportunity. I expect no miracles. I did know that millions go under to live "lives of quiet desperation," but I believed that I had enough intelligence to beat the racket, at least in an era of glittering prosperity.

I am not black-balled. Nobody knows me. All the years when I skipped around the embers of radicalism were under a comforting cloak of obscurity so now I walk through the labor market on my own two feet, new, pristine, unsullied. Prospective employers know nothing of my tainted thoughts. They see before them a lean-faced young man with a rolled-brim, grey fedora, a herringbone tweed coat, a moderately restrained tie, and a crack work record. My finger nails are clean, my hair is cut, I am not a leper, and my breath is good. I carry no tracts, speeches or hand grenades. And the answer is always: "Sorry." And then the reasons: Not expanding right now, afraid of labor demands, costs rising, business sliding, not enough experience, bringing up our own young men, etc. It is all very courteous, amiable, and fruitless.

This is not a depression. This is the phenomenon of prosperity which we are taught to believe is normal but which in reality is rarer than depression, just as peace is less frequent and of less duration than war. There are more people working than ever before in United States. Wages are higher. There is more money in circulation.

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But there are still the unemployed, long moving lines of them in every city—a shifting, oscillating, wondering mass of people.

But still there are not enough of them to remind the majority that but for the grace of God . . .

This generation of adult Americans has lived through a minor depression, a major depression, a recession, and two world wars. It is now bungling through a reconversion with millions *still* ill-fed, ill-clothed, ill-housed, and is heading into either the greatest depression of all or a third world war, or both, and it has just reelected a conservative Republican majority to Congress!

Heaven help the working man? Oh, no. He'll get just what he deserves, a sharp kick in the seat. But next time, as the voice of my friend told me, he might strike down what is called "the system." He would have described it with a universal sweep as the whole system of capital, political democracy, and business enterprise. For a moment the prospect is intriguing or frightening according to the mood and then I retreat to indifference. I want that job and that home.

The process of personally receiving the impact of the system goes on, but with only an ephemeral result like the depressing effect of "The Iceman Cometh." Every day I walk miles. I call at business offices, employment agencies, government offices, stores, factories. Admittedly I could get "some kind of a job" but I am still stubborn enough to think that I can get my own type of work. Between calls I glue my nose to store windows and hungrily price the washing machines, radios, garden tools, beds, toys, blankets, electric ranges—all the glitter and joy that are not mine. I cannot drag myself past a book store or magazine stand. I build up my library and line my pie-in-the-sky book shelves.

I go to the public library and wear out my eyes on the classified ads of a dozen papers, first the "Help Wanted Male" columns, then the "Suburban Homes" columns. The one out of a hundred that says "GI Approved" I read hungrily.

I go to the lounges of the big hotels where I sink down on a plush chair and watch all the plush men of success belching quietly, smoking big cigars, planning big deals. I do not wish to overthrow them. I wish to emulate them. I am on the outside looking in, the great unwanted. That is the part that hurts.

The voice comes along again and says: "Yes the 'hard core' can be hurt with safety, but not twenty or thirty or forty millions."

About 150 miles away my wife and two children wait patiently and spend about $10 a week on groceries. My board and room costs me $15 a week; other expenses about $7.00. Those figures are monumental.

The family lives decently in a scenic urban district, no slums, no migratory jalopy existence, no poverty, or hunger. The children play outdoors in warm clothes. But the dividing line is a hair.

For me it won't go on forever. I know, because I am an American and sooner or later I'll get a break. All Americans know that sooner or later they will get a break. That is the traditional, proper, and ordained way of things. And for the statistical individual it is probably true. The commutations and permutations of chance will sooner or later bring me and a job into amalgamation, and then, being an American, all my doubts about the system of free enterprise will evaporate in enjoying the consummation of my dreams.

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This will happen unless IT comes. "IT" is the unthinkable, the unprintable—another depression. Yes, there are the backlog of consumer demands, the volume of savings, and enough foreign trade coupled with the restriction of production by corporations and unions to keep the mechanism of prosperity clicking along merrily for a while. But upon examination we note that there has been no alteration in the modus operandi of the economic system sufficiently drastic to eliminate any of the *causes* of the Great Depression of the thirties.

The gaunt faced facts of this present themselves to the American only when he becomes hungry. Then thoughts of social change are shouted to the winds, but in the meantime the United States of America presents a different aspect. Americans use their ingenuity, their talents, energy, and wealth to peddle soap, refrigerators and the virtues of private enterprise to each other. And so there is a conflict from which we endeavor to escape, further generating an atmosphere remote from what we would expect to see in a conquering nation just emerged victoriously with little physical or human damage from a war fought for high ideals. It is rather the atmosphere one would expect to see in a nation which did not know whether it had won or lost; or how to cling to the glorious tinsel of victory a little longer; or lastly, and tragically, whether or not peace was to be preferred to war.

And so I, the job seeker, find myself harassed by a ragged apprehension that perhaps my mathematical job probability will become a zero before I can acquire the five acres and two bedrooms. The prosperous, busy people I see about me are burdened apparently by no such cares, because they have a job. That must be the solution. When I get my job, when I take possession of that shack, when I'm putting a little bit in the sock, I too will discard my cares about the greater order of things.

Then, because I know what is going to happen, I will sit snugly by. I can keep myself very busy with two dozen hens and one dozen rose bushes.

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The Case for Viet Nam

George F. Sheldon

IN RECENT WEEKS, French expeditionary forces in Indo-China have been engaged with Vietnamese nationalists in a military conflict which now offers little promise of settlement by peaceable means. The Vietnamese, numbering some 18,000,000 and forming the most vigorous and politically-conscious group among the peoples of Indo-China, have established what they call the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam and are bitterly opposed to the forcible restoration of French authority in the country which they inhabit. Although the precise political delimitation of Viet Nam is impossible, the area under dispute is roughly that embracing the provinces of Tonkin, Annam and Cochin-China. These provinces, extending along the eastern, S-shaped coastline of Indo-China, make up the cultural unit of Viet Nam.

The relevant, over-all issue would seem to be: who deserves to rule in Indo-China? Assuming that the criterion of the general welfare is paramount, who, in the light of the history of Indo-China up to the moment, can guarantee that country justice, freedom and security?

After more than 80 years of French rule and five years of Japanese occupation, Vietnamese nationalists established a republican government over all of Viet Nam with its capital at Hanoi in the northern province of Tonkin. In repudiating the French protectorate, the Vietnamese base their declaration of independence on (1) a protracted series of abuses at the hands of the French colonial administration, (2) the contemptible behavior of French authority in the face of Japanese aggression and occupation, (3) the organization of an anti-Japanese resistance movement for which the Vietnamese were solely responsible and (4) the clear indication that France has no intention but that of re-establishing control over Viet Nam regardless of the means employed.

In assuming control of Viet Nam the declared intention of the new government has been to insure the free economic development of the country, to provide a broader educational base and to promote the democratic liberties of speech, press, assembly, and the privilege of the ballot. No one at all familiar with the facts including informed Frenchmen, would disclaim that all of these blessings have been more or less denied the Vietnamese people during the 80-odd years of French control.

In the seven-months period following V-J Day, during which time the Vietnamese were relatively free of foreign interference, they met the threefold problem of famine, illiteracy and political subservience with an energy which brought more real progress to Viet Nam than had been achieved during 86 years of French rule.

Historically, the yearly yield of rice in Tonkin has followed a cyclical pattern, and in the years when the rice crop failed there was no alternative nourishment in sufficient quantity to prevent widespread starvation. The year 1932 was such a year. A French journalist described the peasants, assembled to draw their rice allotment, as "Nothing but a mortal misery from which, through thousands of blackened mouths, come the terrible cries of animals." A French agricultural expert shook his head and said, "Irremediable misery!" In this same year 1,213,906 tons of rice were exported from Indo-China.

When the rice crop threatened to fail in the winter of 1945-46, the Viet Nam administration organized a campaign for growing non-rice crops and the famine, which had seemed almost certain, was averted. At the same time, universal compulsory education at the primary level was decreed. The elderly illiterates attended classes at night and all the children went to school where they learned their own language and not that "Our ancestors are the Gauls." Universal suffrage was proclaimed and the people were taught how to vote. Everywhere in Hanoi appeared the order, "Go to the polls." The constitution of Viet Nam—a real constitution with a Bill of Rights—was completed shortly before the recent withdrawal of the Viet Nam government from Hanoi.

The facts as they are presented here, bearing in mind that Japanese occupation, Allied bombardment and adverse weather conditions had reduced the economy of Indo-China to a state of near paralysis, should provide a fair idea of the sort of government the Vietnamese want and are capable of providing for themselves. The fact is, however, that despite such a remarkable performance on the part of the new government Indo-China has been aptly described as "the most poorly-reported area of the post-war period." For lack of more detailed information the Viet Nam nationalist movement has been passed off as simply a "Japanese time-bomb in the Orient"—or as a tool of Russian intrigue. The Russian business is based on the fact that Viet Nam's

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President Ho Chi Minh visited Moscow twenty years ago and apparently took some revolutionary post-graduate work there. Aside from this, Ho Chi Minh has been, by all available information, recognized by governmental authorities and journalists, French and foreign, as a sincere, capable and intensely democratic leader of his people who has publicly rejected the feasibility of communism in Viet Nam.

Whatever the numerical strength of the communists in Viet Nam it certainly does not begin to approach that of such a presumably anti-communist group as the million-or-so native Roman Catholics. Last February, four native Vietnamese bishops* stated their position explicitly in a broadcast from Radio Hanoi "to the Christians of the world and to the peoples of the United States and the United Kingdom":

> We, the four Vietnamese bishops of the vicariates of Phat-diem, Bui-chu and Vinh-long, addressed toward the end of last month a pressing appeal to Our Holy Father, the Pope, to Their Eminences, the Cardinals, to Their Excellencies, the Archbishops and the Bishops, to the clergy and Catholics of the universe in favor of the independence of our country. . . .
>
> We appeal equally to the English and American people, and request that they intervene effectively to spare us the horrors of war at the very moment when the entire world begins to enjoy the peace so long desired and so dearly acquired.
>
> Our dear country of Viet Nam has been invaded. To defend its independence and the cause of justice and liberty, its children, animated by the purest patriotism, are decimated on the field of battle at a time when their arms would be so useful in the reconstruction of their country. . . .

In its many publications and public statements, the Viet Nam government has indicated not the slightest communist slant, nor has it taken any collectivist action. The most distinguished of the bishops referred to above specifically denied the imputation of communism, and, for that matter, article 12 of the Viet Nam constitution provides that "The right of private property is guaranteed to all citizens." In any case, there is no reason to believe that France is capable of protecting Indo-China from anybody's imperialism. Her shameful capitulation in 1940 in the face of Japanese aggression (when she was certainly stronger than she is today), and the complexion of her own government are certainly the worst imaginable insurance against any Russian thrust at Indo-China.

The Japanese Greater-East-Asia campaign made no noticeable headway among the Vietnamese. In 1940, a few months after Japan had taken the first of the steps which were to bring about the eclipse of French sovereignty in Indo-China, Vietnamese resistance groups had already been formed. In September of that year, a native uprising took place near Saigon in which the insurgents distributed leaflets calling attention to the threat of Japanese imperialism and denouncing the French collaborators. This movement was successfully repressed and the way cleared for the transfer of authority in Indo-China to Japan, a move surely constituting the vastest and cheapest single victory in the War of the Pacific. While Japanese power in Indo-China grew at the expense of France, a purely native organization, the Viet Minh, or League for the Independence of Viet Nam, likewise grew in strength, eventually bringing together that assemblage of Vietnamese nationalists which was to form the core of the present government.

On the basis of a glimpse at the history of Indo-China and the picture of current developments in that country one need scarcely look elsewhere for the explanation of a resolute and spontaneous resistance to the return of French control. The scandal of the French-controlled opium monopoly, the abysmal condition of the Indo-Chinese laborer, particularly miners and peasants, the super-abundance of colonial officials and the discriminations against native merchants and functionaries, the restrictions against freedom of movement, press and assembly, and the consistent use of torture by the French police are integral aspects of the French régime in Indo-China. The list of grievances is overwhelming, a specific instance of which is cited below, both for its authenticity and the aptness with which it illustrates the whimsical brutality of which a totalitarian régime is capable, and against which any claim of a railroad here or a library there must seem the shallowest of arguments. Describing a "flood-control" which consisted in breaching the levees of the Red River at a distance from Hanoi which insured the safety of the European population, the Frenchman, Pierre Duclaux, wrote, in 1909: "The entire province of Vinh-yen is flooded. The farm-animals and, if necessary, the natives, are drowned. In any case the harvest is destroyed. When the danger has passed, the survivors are enjoined to repair the dike and to await the following year."

A broader political basis might well have precluded such arbitrary action, but, in fact, no serious attempt was ever made to provide the Vietnamese people with real representative powers. The Vietnamese intellectual, often fêted in Paris, found himself, upon his return to Indo-China, an outcast in his own country. Possibly some lower administrative position was open to him. All that was asked was that he accept whatever security this position offered and feel no compassion toward his less privileged compatriot.

*Ho Ngoc Cân, Bishop of Bui-chu—Ngô-dinh-Thûc, Bishop of Vinh-long—Le huu Tu, Bishop of Phat-diem—Jean Baptiste Nguyen ba Tong, First Vietnamese Bishop.

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For a long, long time the Vietnamese watched the governors despatched to Indo-China by the home government come and go—bad governors who oppressed them, and relatively good governors whose best intentions were inevitably thwarted by the reigning colonial clique. The Vietnamese feel that, while their historical and cultural ties argue in favor of some sort of mutually beneficial collaboration with France, the latter country has thoroughly and irrevocably forfeited its right to rule them. When Allied forces arrived in Cochin-China to supervise the repatriation of the Japanese, Viet Nam representatives in Saigon made it plain that the meaning and importance of the Allied mission was fully appreciated, reserving only one demand—no French troops.

Whether or not British authority, backed by a full military division, actually intended before its arrival in Indo-China to depose the Viet Nam government's Southern Committee and to offer to France the gift of her reluctant colony will probably never be known. There is no doubt that British authority did precisely that.

★

France continued a campaign of "pacification" in Cochin-China launched by the British. Viet Nam fought back within Cochin-China and negotiated in Tonkin with French representatives who had proceeded there. Viet Nam demanded the recognition of Cochin-China for what it was—an integral part of Viet Nam. A compromise was reached which seemed satisfactory. French troops would be amicably received in Tonkin in exchange for which Viet Nam would be recognized as a free state, with the political future of Cochin-China to be determined by referendum.

The terms of the agreement—signed on March 6, 1946—were clearly in favor of Viet Nam. A full division of troops in Tonkin had no apparent duties to fulfil and was likely to be burdensome, but provision had been made for the withdrawal of these troops within five years. The title of free state was clearly a gain, and no doubt existed as to the outcome of the proposed referendum in Cochin-China. A handful of Vietnamese landowners, leasing their land on a crop-sharing basis, had grown rich under the French, but the vast majority of the people, rich or poor, adhered to the Hanoi government.

Shortly afterward, however, the Viet Nam government learned that the French colonial administration intended to make its own, unaided preparations for the referendum and that there would be no such thing as a mixed Franco-Vietnamese committee of supervision. Viet Nam representatives were flatly denied freedom to appear in any part of Cochin-China, the press was rigorously controlled and the effort to detach Cochin-China politically was intensified. A provisional government of Cochin-China was established and a certain Dr. Thinh, one of the wealthy landlords, was made its provisional president—subject to the final authority of French High Commissioner d'Argenlieu. On June 1, 1946, the title of "The Autonomous Republic of Cochin-China" was ceremoniously bestowed upon Dr. Thinh and a makeshift cabinet. Meanwhile, the effort to predetermine the outcome of the referendum was implemented by the most savage means. Stressing the undesirability of those natives of Tonkinese origin, the military and the rubber-growing interests of Saigon carried out a joint operation which resulted in the arbitrary arrest and consignment as plantation labor of thousands of local Vietnamese.

In June, discussions were opened at Fontainebleau between France and a Vietnamese delegation headed by President Ho Chi Minh. Viet Nam continued its effort to secure an adequate hearing of the Cochin-China question, while the French were just as resolute in declaring that the present conference was not competent to discuss this matter. The Fontainebleau conference dragged on until September, terminating in an agreement which, it was hoped, would provide a *modus vivendi* pending a more definitive settlement.

Up to and beyond October 30—the day on which the terms of the *modus vivendi* took effect—the picture in Cochin-China remained essentially the same, paralleled by an ever-increasing tension in Hanoi. A report on the Cochin-China situation from August to October, 1946, prepared by a representative of the French Ministry of Education is a dreary catalogue of the pillaging, arbitrary arrests and executions without judgment committed by French troops. On November 10 the fictional character of "The Autonomous Republic of Cochin-China" was revealed, if there had ever been any doubt about it, in spectacular fashion by the suicide of puppet-president Thinh. Shortly before his death, Thinh had declared to his colleagues, "I am heartbroken to have led you on this adventure. I have been asked to play a farce." The military establishments to the north held themselves ready, and by November 18 fighting had broken out at the Tonkinese port of Haiphong, eventually spreading and precipitating the clash of French and Vietnamese troops over all of Viet Nam.

The fighting at Haiphong was, of course, the result of incidents—the French claiming the right to protect Chinese nationals in Haiphong, and the Vietnamese refusing to evacuate the Chinese quarter of the city in accordance with French demands. The emergence of Haiphong as the focus of conflict was virtually inevitable. Following the detachment of Cochin-China, this port became an economic life-line, the sole remaining

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link of significant magnitude which Viet Nam maintained with world commerce. The divergence of views with regard to Viet Nam's commercial sovereignty during the preparation of the *modus vivendi* resulted in what was only a vague, provisional settlement of this issue.

Two days before the armed clashes at Haiphong, Radio Hanoi announced the text of a message to Admiral d'Argenlieu in which Ho Chi Minh stated: "I have the duty of addressing to your excellency a firm protest against the unilateral creation of a French bureau of customs and control of foreign commerce. . . . [This] measure is contrary to the letter and spirit of article 6 of the *modus vivendi* which reserves this question to the competence of a mixed Franco-Vietnamese committee of co-ordination of customs and foreign commerce." French spokesmen apparently had no comment.

On December 20, the artillery roared into action at Hanoi, the Vietnamese using old French 75's and Japanese field-pieces seized after V-J Day, and the French hitting back with aerial bombardment of Viet Nam gun emplacements. A comprehensive description of the immediate causes and nature of the battle on the basis of the conflicting reports available is scarcely possible at the present time. French sources point to a congratulatory cable of December 18 from Ho Chi Minh to Leon Blum on the occasion of the latter's acceptance of the premiership of France, followed two days later by what is described as the "Pearl Harbor attack" at Hanoi. Vietnamese sources report that on December 18 Ho Chi Minh to Léon Blum on the occasion of calling attention to a movement of 3,000 French troops in violation of previous agreements which subjected all troop movement to the prior consent of a mixed military commission. A complete account, however, of recriminatory press releases would run into needless and unreliable detail. In the midst of the present chaos in Viet Nam, the surest guide to an appreciation of what is going on there would seem to be the respective records of France and Viet Nam prior to the Haiphong incident.*

One of the few thoroughly credible references to the Tonkin situation by a French spokesman is that of Minister of Colonies Moutet on January 4: "I regret it, but the Vietnamese have systematically destroyed all the hopes we had." The latest indications are that hopes for a speedy French victory are indeed fast declining. Available reports of territorial gains tell little; accounts of the quality of Vietnamese resistance tell a great deal. A Reuters despatch reports that "The Vietnamese resist as long as there is breath in their bodies." French troops battling toward the alleged location of Ho Chi Minh's fugitive government were met by Vietnamese civilians flinging home-made hand-grenades. And, by contrast, the morale of French troops is extremely, and understandably, low. French commanders have found their detachments weakened not only by a tireless enemy but by the desertion, mutiny and suicide of their own troops as well. Reports of the disgust with which French troops face their assignment are borne out by impressions gained during my personal contacts with them (in Indo-China) some months ago.

By way of conclusion, it should be particularly emphasized that a French "victory" can only be of the most sterile sort. The Vietnamese have had French rule and they have had their own, and their stand is that "France can make Viet Nam a cemetery, but not a colony." It is a dangerously simple process to assume that France-in-Europe is one with France-in-Asia, and to conclude that whatever moral greatness we associate with the European country accrues automatically in the Far East. It is all too simple for us to be unduly skeptical of the proposition that in the matter of government by and for the people it is an Oriental people who have taken the initiative where a western nation failed.

MR. SHELDON, replying to our editorial, "White Man's Burden" (THE COMMONWEAL, *January* 10), *has presented the case for Viet Nam as well as one can present the case for any of the current revolutions against the continued presence of Europeans in countries where they are not wanted—it is always the same case. Details as to the degree of exploitation, cruelty and ineptitude vary and, since few in America have means of direct investigation, it is difficult to argue about them. (However Mr. Sheldon's remark about France's "shameful capitulation in* 1940 *in the the face of Japanese aggression"—as if Hitler never existed—obviously is highly unfair.) As for the local "George Washington," he may be mainly or entirely a patriot; he may be working for communism and Russian power; what matters is the result of his revolution if it succeeds. We continue to think that most of these revolutions lead to chaos or to the subjection to another Power of the people they aim to liberate. We still think that the "liberator" can succeed only when conditions promise success.*

Mr. Sheldon says that the real question to answer is: Who can guarantee justice, freedom and security to Viet Nam? In a blueprint the answer is Mr. Sheldon's. But in a world in which liberty still depends on power the Vietnamese are

*French apologetics covering aggression in Indo-China do not seem to have improved much during the last hundred years, anyway. On preparing to attack Cochin-China in 1858, Napoleon III announced that "The government of the emperor cannot allow its overtures to be spurned." On December 26, 1946 Colonial Minister Moutet announced that "France cannot permit anyone to force her hand."

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not equipped to guarantee, alone, their safety or freedom. The future of their freedom lies with the future of our own; all our freedoms must be re-created and guaranteed by the concert of Powers. THE EDITORS.

Duns Scotus

Striking like lightning to the quick of the real world
Scotus has mined all ranges to their deepest veins:
But where, oh, on what blazing mountain of theology
And in what Sinai's furnace
Did God refine that gold?

Who ruled those arguments in their triumphant order
And armed them with their strict celestial light?
See the lance-lightning, blade-glitter, banner-progress
As love advances, company by company
In sunlit teams his clean embattled reasons,

Until the firmament, with high heavenly marvel
Views in our crystal souls her blue embodiment,
Unfurls a thousand flags above our heads—
It is the music of Our Lady's army!

For Scotus is her theologian,
Nor has there ever been a braver chivalry than his precision.
His thoughts are skies of cloudless peace
Bright as the vesture of her grand aurora
Filled with the rising Christ.

But we, a weak, suspicious generation,
Loving emotion, hating prayer,
We are not worthy of his wisdom.
Creeping like beasts between the mountain's feet
We look for laws in the Arabian dust.
We have no notion of his freedom
Whose acts despise the chains of choice and passion.
We have no love for his beatitude
Whose act despises motion:
Whose love flies home forever
As silver as felicity,
Working and quiet in the dancelight of an everlasting arrow.

Lady, the image of whose heaven
Sings in the might of Scotus' reasoning:
There is no line of his that has not blazed your glory in the schools,
Though in dark words, without romance,
Calling us to swear you our liege.

Language was far too puny for his great theology:
But. oh! His thoughts strode through those words
Bright as the conquering Christ
Between the clouds His enemies:
And in the clearing storm, and Sinai's dying thunder
Scotus comes out, and shakes his golden locks
And sings like the African sun.

THOMAS MERTON.

The Stage & Screen

Street Scene

IT WILL BE, certainly, its change in form which has so enlarged Elmer Rice's Pulitzer Prize play into the monumental—and often truly impressive—job it is. Both the author, and Dwight Deere Wiman & The Playwrights' Company, the producers, have chosen to name it "A Dramatic Musical," but as no one could possibly define this abstraction, I think it had better go down here plainly as an Opera. People who remember the fable will recall that it is an exact working-out of the title: a business of a tenement house, its stoop, its curb, its tenants; the passers-by, the children. Even the weather. Its theme, in so far as it has a single one, is tragic; but this is so tangled with elements which are comic, it has been necessary for the movers of the show to employ, I should say, every single operatic convention in its musicking. Necessarily, the story of the wretched Maurrant, his lonely wife, her lover, her two children—*plus* the neighbors, strangers and merely incidental people—has been done into solos, duets, trios, quartets, chorus stuff, quite endless recitative, and spoken dialogue. And there is a short, lickity-split INHERENT *pas de deux*. On the debit side, all of this will sometimes add up to stretches of superb (I'm sure) musicianly contortion, which is, frankly, stultifying. On the credit side, there are clear moments (many of them) of bright gaiety and moving sadness. The two opening numbers, the first a kind of put-and-take arrangement, setting the weather of a New York summer's simmering day; and the second, a children's round game—played, danced, jumped and sung by a number of wonderful kids—I thought as intriguing as they were delighting. And the excellence, I want to say the illumination, of all the singing, particularly of Polyna Stoska's and Anne Jeffreys's and Brian Sullivan's portrayals, sustained and colored all. For the songs, I thought Langston Hughes's wholly simple, compassionate lyrics exactly right, and of course, as was to be expected, his children numbers are lovely. In the recitatives, however, both the words and the convention itself, bothered and distracted me. One trouble is that I felt Kurt Weill's music this time to be far more complex than memorable: often prolonged beyond the pitch of the situation; and in the preparatory passages, too cinematically compelling—the kind of panting crescendo stuff which always heralds disaster (guns, guns, the knife, the chase!) on the screen.

I think this will appear a stingy analysis of what is essentially a (Mielziner) handsome, always rewarding, often thrilling show. But the music end of things on the Street is simply too mixed and exciting for a working critic not to try to pulverize it a little. Over twenty years ago, Gilbert Seldes was right when he hazarded that "song-and-dance" was, and should become more and more, the American contribution to the theater mess. Adjacent to this (I underline *adjacent*), I am sure he would have added a species called "words-to-music." On these two

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scores, the Musical people have tried, the Dramatic people, the Opera people, the Operetta people; and the Ballet people are trying. In the meantime, the state of transition still obtains, no new conventions have been created, no useful criticism has evolved, and no out-and-out invention has been publicly available. For present purposes ("Street Scene" purposes, I mean), I should say that it is upon a *libretto* that an Opera should be based, rather than upon a *play;* that Mr. Rice himself, and Mr. Weill and Mr. Hughes, have understandably been too respectful of every inch of the original drama. But it is also necessary to state that this conclusion is merely the result of study-in-progress rather than any self-acknowledged authority. If I have seemed to stress that there is much to be learned from, as well as much to be enjoyed in this show, that is surely the most serious professional tribute one can pay. (*At the Adelphi.*)

Ruth Draper

IT IS NICE to be able to announce that the cure for all the scornful, closet boys (those Readers!) is now to be obtained, under John C. Wilson's banner, at the Empire. For those in the know, it will seem fatuous to reiterate that Miss Draper is one of the greatest exponents of the Art of Acting to be found on either side of the Atlantic. That the matinee audiences are always jammed with the profession merely emphasizes the fact. Two new War sketches starred the first week's engagement and I think you should try to pick them up if schedules allow. The French one, "Vive La France," seemed to me perfect; and the English number, "The Return," almost so. In the latter, it is the second episode, presenting the character of a venerable village Postmistress which, in its absolute authenticity, rather overweights the entire conception. Or rather, it is perhaps plainer to say that the Young Wife of the first half just did not seem to me to be as skillfully written or visually realized. Otherwise, most of the old favorites are listed, the only necessity being to watch the papers, as the time for the programmes appears to vary from week to week. (*At the Empire.*)

The Big Two

A RUSSIAN Captain and an American gal correspondent, hurling in and out of a hotel in Russian-occupied Baden, supposedly justify this title. There is a good deal of business tracking down a nazi radio commentator, although LOVE is really the only serious occupation under view. It all makes for a completely silly but not unenjoyable evening, with Claire Trevor and Philip Dorn handling the title rôles with (is there such a word?) aplomb. (*At the Booth.*)

KAPPO PHELAN.

Look, Ma, I'm Acting

MOVIEGOERS whose preferences run to melodrama peppered with violence will find a large assortment of films of this type coming up soon. Of the four reviewed below, *"Lady in the Lake"* is by far the most unusual. Its screenplay, written by Steve Fisher from the novel by Raymond Chandler, has been directed by Robert Montgomery who employs a technique not new to movies but one seldom used so extensively. The story is told by Detective Phillip Marlowe in the first person and is filmed from his point of view so that he and the camera are one. Consequently, although you hear him a great deal, you see Marlowe (played by Robert Montgomery) only in a few sequences when he talks directly to the audience or during the action of the film when he happens to pass before a mirror. This tricky technique involves some unorthodox movie acting, in that the actors talking to Marlowe look right into the camera. This is seldom done in good cinema. Consequently you also become identified with the camera and with Marlowe—and then suddenly it dawns on you that you are Robert Montgomery and a very good actor at that. I don't know how women in the audience are going to react to this, especially since Marlowe is subjected to some pretty rough treatment at times (the camera even sees stars) and at other times Marlowe and the camera get very amatory over lovely Audrey Totter. Male audiences will no doubt find all this an interesting experience.

I must admit, however, that the extraordinary technique in "Lady in the Lake" is rather wearing (you work throughout the entire picture) and occasionally it distracts your attention from the story. Perhaps this does not matter too much, as the plot, not one of Chandler's best, is on the vague side. You may even have a little difficulty in keeping clues, characters and motives straight, but the suspense is swell and the whole piece is loaded with vicarious thrills and breezy wisecracks. Devotees of Phillip Marlowe may become worried that their favorite hard-boiled dick is going soft because he talks so much about writing a book called "If I Should Die Before I Live." Actually he sticks to detecting and gets in and out of his usual jams. Besides Miss Totter, the camera, and Montgomery's voice, the cast includes Lloyd Nolan, Tom Tully, Jayne Meadows and others, all understandingly directed by Montgomery. To him and to Producer George Haight should go huzzahs and support for their sincere attempt to give us something different in cinema.

"The Man I Love" is a good example of the movies's ability to put over a corny story mainly through the attractions of one superb performance and the fancy trimmings that surround it. As a night club singer who has been kicked around by life and who goes home at Christmas time staying long enough to pull the various members of her unhappy family out of various messes, Ida Lupino treats us to cinema acting that must make other Hollywood actresses green with envy. Her torchy, deep-throated singing of "Bill," "Why Was I Born?" and the title song, her sympathy and love for her sisters (Andrea King, Martha Vickers) and for her weakling brother (Warren Douglas), her adroit handling of the cheap racketeer (Robert Alda) who's doing her family more harm than good, and her touching portrayal of a woman carrying a torch (during the romantic episodes with Bruce Bennett) make one realize again that as an

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actress Miss Lupino is tops, although she seldom gets material worthy of her talents. Director Raoul Walsh lets her run the gamut in this little opus, gives her good assistance with a sincere supporting cast and even backs her with some of the hottest musical numbers ever heard in a straight melodrama. But neither Lupino nor Walsh can always attract our attention from this overloaded, sensationally melodramatic plot. In spite of the film's faults, I should certainly advise your seeing "The Man I Love." Lupino alone is worth more than the price of admission. And you'll probably be amused as I was at the double meaning of this harassed heroine's sudden quotation from Oscar Wilde: "We're all of us in the gutter, but some of us are looking at the stars."

"Dead Reckoning" starts out so well that you have every right to expect a first-rate thriller. Most of this story of a man's friendship for a war buddy, is revealed in a flashback as Rip Murdock (Humphrey Bogart) talks to a priest. Just as Rip and his pal (William Prince), a couple of ex-paratroopers, were about to be decorated for combat heroism, the pal ran away. Rip follows him to a southern city, learns that he has been killed and was once implicated in a murder. Fortunately Rip is the tough Humphrey Bogart type, for he resolves to clear his friend's name and is soon involved with characters that only a Bogart can handle: the alluring and mysterious girl (Lizabeth Scott) whom his friend hoped to marry, the night club owner (Morris Carnovsky) who holds a strange influence over her, the latter's bodyguard (Marvin Miller) who prefers to beat up his victims to the accompaniment of soft music. So far, so interesting! Director John Cromwell develops his characters and uses cinema effectively to build a tight suspense. But neither cast nor director got much help from the five writers who worked on this screenplay, and as the picture progresses it gets so involved in explanations that it is almost impossible to follow. The whole piece dissipates itself into a series of exciting scenes without meaning. This is a fault of which more and more movie makers are guilty lately as they waste a good cast and director on a story that doesn't make sense or is so badly written that audiences cannot grasp its intentions. After all, even violence for violence's sake isn't much of an attraction.

"Swell Guy" is another film that starts with great promise as Jim Duncan (Sonny Tufts) returns to his small California town a celebrity. This war correspondent is greeted like a hero. But we soon learn what a heel he really is—not an obvious character like Pal Joey, but the more subtle type portrayed by Rex Harrison in "Notorious Gentleman." This, however, is as far as subtlety goes in "Swell Guy." Its ridiculously pretentious dialogue (with references to its central figure as "Marco Polo and Ernest Hemingway wrapped in one" or to the carefree love affair between him and the girl played by Ann Blyth as "a whirl on a merry-go-round") has little relation to real life. Although his mother (Mary Nash) is wise to him from the beginning, a large number of people are taken in by Jim's surface charms, including his sister-in-law (Ruth Warrick) who is ready to run away with this handsome cad. Jim does prove a hero by rescuing his young nephew, an act which inspires his naïve brother to call him a "swell guy." But as a study of good and evil in one man, which this picture purports to be, this is only a confused account of a heel not worth a shoe tinker's consideration.

PHILIP T. HARTUNG.

Barry Fitzgerald, Visitor

NOW, when they hear or read his name, millions see him as the little priest of "Going My Way," clutching the tops of the bedclothes and listening to his music box tinkle "Turra-lurra-lurra." But to me he will always be Fluther Good, the Dublin carpenter in the first act of O'Casey's "Plough and the Stars," opening and closing the tenement door on which he has just put a new lock, exuding man's satisfaction in a job well done until pride finally breaks over action into speech: "Openin' and shuttin' now with a well-mannered motion, like the door of a select bar in a high class pub." Or I remember him as Captain Boyle making his famous belly-first entrance in O'Casey's "Juno and the Paycock," cooking his sassige, and singing, "When the Robins Nest Agen."

When the Abbey Players of Dublin closed their nine-months' American tour in Boston in 1935, Barry Fitzgerald, their comedian, was complaining that although he'd traveled from coast to coast, he'd seen only large cities, nothing practically of rural and small town America. "I've got to go down to Charleston, West Virginia," I said. "Come with me to the Kanawha Valley; you'll find America there." "I will that," said Barry, who is a bachelor and hence free to go a-junketing when the excursion offers. So we got out the old Hudson car and started.

We had a leisurely trip through Connecticut, Pennsylvania, and down the Valley of Virginia to Lexington, where we turned west to Covington to follow the Midland Trail to Charleston.

We took our time, stopping when we'd a mind to watch a race meet or have a drink and a bit of talk in the small towns where phonographs were wailing out the clotted misery of hillbilly ballads. Barry had never heard those in Chicago and St. Louis.

He loved downtown Charleston on Saturday night. "Look at that drunk," Barry would say, "see how straight and still he carries his head. He thinks if he keeps his head straight, his body won't wobble." He liked to watch the black-hatted, suspendered mountain men stalking along, their wives behind them carrying the bundles. He was especially delighted with the grifters on Virginia Street, the patent medicine men high pitching their wares under the flare of a gasoline torch on Summers Street. Anywhere there was a crowd, life, emotion, that's where he delighted to be. He loved the carnival and the midway, and the woman who dove, yes, dove from a hundred-foot pole into a wet dishrag.

He made me go back three or four times to see that high-diving woman, her clothes aflame with burning gasoline, dive into a shallow tank of water. This event, the climax of the carnival, took place at 11 PM. He memo-

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rized the barker's spiel and recited it at intervals all the way back to Boston. It went something like this:

> Madame Zinzibar-Nervine, fresh from the triumphs in the capitals of Europe, will now make her death-defying dive from the stu-pen-dous height of a-hun-dred-and-fif-ty feet into three feet of water. The management cannot, will not, dare not assume any re-spon-sibil-i-ty for any loss of life or limb in this co-los-sal feat.

One night we took him up to Marmet to see a gyp circus, one red in tooth and claw. He ate cotton candy, watched the three-card monte man play his tricks on the top of an open umbrella, admired the skill of the short-change artist mitting halves as he sold tickets. Another evening we drove him up in the country to see Byron Spawn in his rôle of the last Dutch Comedian, while between the acts hillbilly trios held contests, fiddling "Hell Among the Yearlin's" and "Don't Let Your Deal Go Down." We put him on the fast *Flying Virginian* and rode him down a piece of the Ohio Valley to see Billy Bryant's showboat play, "Lena Rivers" and hear Vic Faust sing "Suckin' Cider through a Straw." And he loved every minute of it. In these extra-Broadway, extra-Hollywood productions he saw salty survivals of the American theatre of yesteryear.

One day we walked him up one of those hollers, the kind the old cow died at the mouth of. At one cabin an old fellow got some home brew out of the well which Barry said beat any poteen he'd ever had. After two bottles of that the old man was singing "Way up on Clinch Mountain," and Barry was replying with his favorite song, the Jacobite ballad, "Charlie Is My Darling."

"If the beer's like that," said Barry, "God save us from the whiskey," after we had left the home of home brew and were picking our way over one of those places where the road crossed the creekbed slaunchwise. All of a sudden Barry let a howl out of him that woke the hills. I turned to see him dancing like mad round a small water snake in the shallows of the creek, the way he used to dance round the Covey in the pub scene of "The Plough and the Stars." It was the first snake he'd ever seen in his natural. He saw his first snake, his first firefly, and heard his first locust in the Kanawha Valley. There also he drank his first mint julep.

He liked the mountain people, noted how the men looked straight through you with unveiled eyes. He found in them the same reticence and modesty which mark the peasants in the West of Ireland. He also admired in them the same capacity for consuming strong drink.

Barry is sentimental about America. "These are my people, and these are my ways," I have often heard him say of Americans and their mode of life. I know that he will always remember with affection West Virginia and its ways. There he got his first intimate look at the old trans-Allegheny country which is the heart of America.

HORACE REYNOLDS.

The Labor Movement

A New United Front

THERE IS AN acute labor angle to the creation a few weeks back of the new organization of anti-communist progressives, Americans for Democratic Action. To begin with, there are a lot of labor people in the movement, both AFL and CIO. But the larger significance emerges only when you consider it as a part of the new united front that is emerging within the CIO.

Communism is not really a problem in the AFL, although it is stronger than many people realize in such unions as the painters, hotel and restaurant employees, building service employees, Hollywood's Conference of Studio Unions, etc. And it is a measure of the hypocrisy of some AFL big shots that they have been so quiet about this brand of Stalinism and so noisy about the CIO brand.

Nevertheless, it is true that only within the CIO is the CP a major problem. In fact, only as it is a problem within the CIO can it be said to be a problem in the United States. It is certainly not a major problem in the US. The menace of reaction is far more serious, the continuing power and cupidity of big capitalism remains far more destructive to our rights and freedoms and hopes.

We have seen during the last year however, how even small unions can throw a considerable monkey-wrench in the national machinery. There is CP strength on various sections of the waterfront (now being dramatically challenged by Joe Curran); in small sectors of communications and transport; in farm equipment; in mining other than coal; in certain auto plants: in a great many electrical, radio and machine plants. We have also seen how CP control of the French labor movement has been used as a most powerful lever in the political life of that country. Ditto for Italy.

Up until a few months ago the CPs within the CIO were on the offensive. Here and there, as in the United Auto Workers, there were individual counter-attacks which had some success. But on the national plane at least there was no organization, no united force, that could compare, in strength and dynamism, with the disciplined militants of the Communist Party.

There were of course the Socialist Party and the Social Democratic Federation (now rumored, incidentally, to be on the verge of reuniting). There were also the Trotskyites. And there was the Association of Catholic Trade Unionists, soon to celebrate its 10th anniversary, but still in the early stages of its great potential growth, having been held back for the last five years by the crippling effects of the war.

Then back in October there was formed in New York City the CIO Committee for Democratic Trade Unionism, also known as the Committee of 33. This was mainly a combination of Social Democrats, Actists and independents who were officials in New York locals of the auto, textile, retail, shipbuilding and utility unions. This was the first example of what you might call an effective united front of anti-communists in the CIO built on a solidly progressive, democratic base.

Now we have the Americans for Democratic Action. It goes far beyond the CIO. It is certainly aimed at leadership of the whole progressive movement in America.

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It may well be aimed at control of the Democratic Party. There are New Deal politicians in it: Leon Henderson, Wilson Wyatt, Herbert Lehman, Chester Bowles. Also New Deal symbols like Mrs. Roosevelt. There are a number of Social Democrats and militant Christians like Reinhold Niebuhr. There are some AFL left-wingers: David Dubinsky (garment); Hugo Ernst (hotel and restaurant); Sal Homan (upholsters)—all presidents; also Killen from the paper workers, McLaurin of the sleeping car porters, Munger of the hatters, Shishkin of the national research department and Cruikshank of the social insurance department.

★

But mostly the thing is interesting and important to American labor because of the impressive array of national leaders of the CIO. Significantly enough, they come mostly from the unions represented in the Committee of 33. There are the following presidents: Walter Reuther (auto); John Green (shipbuilding); Emil Rieve (textile); Willard Townsend (transport service employees), and Samuel Wolchok (retail). And something new and very spicy has been added: the national office of the CIO. The presence of Jim Carey, secretary-treasurer, was not surprising, but it was a bit unusual to see Allan Haywood there, he being not only director of organization and a CIO vice-president, but the nearest thing to a personal representative of Phil Murray, CIO president. This was all the more curious because Murray had been listed as a vice-chairman of the new Progressive Citizens of America, the fellow-travelers' counterpart to ADA. (There were also rumors that Murray would not have accepted the job if he had been asked.)

But perhaps there was an ingredient in the ADA that was even newer and spicier. That was the presence of a number of Catholics: Carey, Martin Kyne of the retail union, and particularly, Father George G. Higgins, COMMONWEAL contributor and assistant director of the Social Action Department of the National Catholic Welfare Conference. This was a brave and commendable step on Father Higgins's part. Surely there is little hope for the success of either Catholics or non-Catholics in the progressive movement unless they can learn to work and fight together. Perhaps it will take some time before we learn to pray together, but even that can only come if we get to know each other in that area of liberal, democratic thought and action that is contrary neither to their principles nor to ours.

It is to be hoped that the ACTU, and pro-labor Catholics generally, will throw in their lot with the ADA. The ADA needs the Catholics, and vice-versa. And both need the strength and encouragement that only a wider unity can give. This is an opportunity that may never come again. There is an anti-communist tide running. It has limited uses, but this is one of them. If we let it slip, we shall probably have to return to our old defensive strategy, each on his own front, waiting for the assault. If we seize it by the forelock, on the other hand, it may well be that at long last there has been launched a sustained offensive that will set the CPs back on their heels in the CIO, the labor movement and the whole democratic world. If you are interested, write to the ADA at either 819 13th St., N.W., Washington 5, D. C., or 9 E. 46th St., New York 17, N. Y.

JOHN C. CORT.

Books of the Week

Lydia Bailey. Kenneth Roberts. Doubleday. $3.00.

MR. ROBERTS'S reputation as America's foremost historical novelist is so firmly established by "Rabble in Arms," "Northwest Passage" and "Oliver Wiswell" that the imperfections of "Lydia Bailey" are rather striking. It is not that this last book is uninteresting or unimportant. Far from it. The hero, Albian Hamlin, leaves his Maine farm to defend the right of freedom of speech and to challenge the constitutionality of the Alien and Sedition Acts in the court of tendentious Judge Chase in Boston.

Lydia Bailey remains an attractive portrait of a young lady, presumably dead, until in the course of his legal work, Albion finds that she is still alive and acting as a governess in Haiti. Albion, a romantic lover as well as a scientific farmer and a progressive lawyer, sails to Haiti where he meets the fantastic Negro, King Dick, one of Toussaint L'Ouverture's many costumed generals. With King Dick's help he finds Lydia. Both of them are unwilling witnesses of the horrifying massacres in the war between Napoleon's army under General Leclerc and the Negro Haitians. After many perils and separations they are reunited and marry each other in the presence of King Dick.

What is in effect a second novel begins with the voyage of Albion, Lydia, King Dick and the Autremont family to France. Through the skull-duggery of a Yankee captain, Lee, Albion and Lydia are captured by Barbary pirates and taken to Tripoli. Here the two Americans

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EUGENE O'NEILL'S
THE ICEMAN COMETH
EVENINGS ONLY INCLUDING SUNDAY
CURTAIN AT 7:30 P. M. SHARP
MARTIN BECK Theatre 45th STREET West of 8th Ave. No Performance MONDAY

INA CLAIRE
in GEORGE KELLY'S Gay Comedy
The FATAL WEAKNESS
With MARGARET DOUGLASS • HOWARD ST. JOHN
Directed by MR. KELLY • Designed by DONALD OENSLAGER
ROYALE Theatre 45th Street West of Broadway. Evgs. 8:35 Matinees Thursday and Saturday 2:35

THE MUSICAL HIT CAROUSEL
Music by RICHARD RODGERS Book & Lyrics by OSCAR HAMMERSTEIN 2nd Directed by ROUBEN MAMOULIAN Dances by AGNES de MILLE
with HENRY MICHEL—IVA WITHERS—JEAN DARLING
ERIC MATTSON—JOHN CONTE—JEAN CASTO
MAJESTIC Thea. 44th Street West of Broadway. Evgs. 8:30 Matinees Thursday and Saturday 2:30

THE MUSICAL HIT OKLAHOMA!
Music by RICHARD RODGERS Book & Lyrics by OSCAR HAMMERSTEIN 2nd Directed by ROUBEN MAMOULIAN Dances by AGNES de MILLE
HAROLD KEEL—MARY HATCHER—DAVID BURNS—RUTH WESTON
ST. JAMES Thea. 44th Street West of Broadway. Evgs. 8:30 Matinees Thursday and Saturday 2:30

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remain as slaves, until they are rescued by King Dick, who had joined Eugene Leitensdorfer, a soldier of fortune, and the American general Eaton. The book ends with the withdrawal of the Americans from Derna and the retirement of Albion and Lydia to a farm in southern France.

This outline hardly suggests the enormous detail or the various political theses of "Lydia Bailey." Roberts's treatment of the revolution in Haiti, for instance, is a complete social and political history. Mr. Roberts makes the most of voodoo, the polygamous black aristocracy, and jungle backgrounds. The major campaigns are described, the atmosphere of riot and rape and massacre thoroughly realized. There are full-length portraits of Toussaint L'Ouverture and of General Dessalines, whose cruelty is almost unimaginable. Slighter characterizations of the French general Leclerc and his wife, the American Naval Captain Rodgers and other historical personages round out the bloody scene. The same scrupulous attention to detail marks the development of the African locale. We learn of Arab cities, visit oases, taste Arabian food, learn the religious customs of Mohammedans. There is ample testimony in the book that Mr. Roberts spent six years' research in its preparation.

All these facts are brought into focus and control by the book's main political thesis and by strong emotional attitudes towards the problems which the hero and heroine encounter. "All the great villains and small villains whom I met so frequently in the events I'm about to set down were consistent men," writes Albion, "unimaginative men who consistently believed in war as a means of settling disputes between nations; equally misguided men who consistently believed that war must be avoided at all hazards, no matter what the provocation. . . ." Thus Roberts has two sets of villains, tyrants like Justice Chase, the Negro general Dessalines, Napoleon and his followers, the Pasha of Tripoli and, on a smaller scale, Captain Lee; and non-interventionists like Colonel Lear, Captain Bainbridge and Commodore Barron, men whom Roberts holds responsible for the disgraceful inactivity of the American Navy during the Tripolitan War. In addition to Albion and Lydia, his heroes are Toussaint L'Ouverture, Commodore Preble, Captain Rodgers, General Eaton, Eugene Leitensdorfer and the romantic King Dick. A man of strong hates and strong loves, Roberts readily persuades his readers to take sides. His characterization and his attitudes are not merely fictitious. His comments on racial questions, democracy and the policies of the State Department are not made merely for the sake of the story. He has drawn up a serious historical indictment of Tobias Lear and a strong vindication of General Eaton. Equally realistic is his condemnation of Napoleon and his reverence for L'Ouverture.

But fiction, as opposed to brilliant historical narrative, or forceful argument, is chiefly dependent on characterization and that kind of action which develops and is developed by character. It is as fiction that "Lydia Bailey" is disappointing. Albion Hamlin, the narrator, is dwarfed by the scenes and personalities he describes, and Lydia herself, despite many efforts to glamorize her personality, has the soul of a self-satisfied school-marm on a foreign mission. There is a good deal of talk about "character" but little real penetration into the mystery of the human personality, a deal of common sense, but not much wisdom, selective and partisan moralization, but no clear morality. Perhaps it is unfair to ask for some inspection or introspection in a book obviously designed as a spectacle, or to suggest that the story so full of activity should rise to dramatic action.

The style is vivid and forceful throughout, with more blasphemy and vulgarity than the situations require. And in King Dick we have a gaudy, amoral survival of the tradition of the rogue novel. FRANCIS X. CONNOLLY.

Ladders to Fire. Anais Nin. Dutton. $2.75.

"LADDERS TO FIRE" is the partial fulfillment of Anais Nin's purpose to put into sequence the stages in the development of woman. Thus far she is concerned only with "the woman at war with herself," the woman "not yet . . . related to the man, only to the child in man, being capable only of maternity."

This volume is in two sections. In the section called "This Hunger," she tells of the relationship between a lonely woman and her public image as a movie-star; and then, by what seems to me a process of concentration rather than the broadening of allusion, she examines the anguish of that actress ("a voiceless woman screaming in a nightmare") in two other women, Lillian and Djuna, seeing them move toward and away from each other in a twilight of half-understood passions—lesbian, masochistic, sadistic—which form, vanish, and re-form as each attempts to find the complete expression of love. In the second section, "Bread and the Wafer," the focus becomes even more painful, as two women, failing in a normal relationship to the same man, realize that they cannot escape the problem by a reversion to an aberrant love for each other in which each seeks only her own image: "They had felt the cold wall, they had felt the mirror that never appeared when they were taken by man."

Although what we have in this volume is admittedly incomplete, already the subtly beautiful structure of the whole novel can be seen. The story begins with the blur of false images on a screen and in a woman's realization that she can love neither the public image nor her private image of herself. The lenses are steadily intensified, and the story ends in so trembling a focus that Djuna, in the whirl of a Montparnasse party, can see only a strictly figured dance within the squares of a chessboard and herself isolated in the agony of ungiven love. She stands helpless on her square and cries out:

> "Bring me one who will rescue me! Am I dreaming or dying? Bring me one who knows that between the dream and the death there is only one frail step, one who senses that between this murder of the present by a dream, and death, there is only one shallow breath. Bring me one who knows that the dream without exit, without explosion, without awakening, is the passageway to the world of the dead! I want my dress torn and stained!"

This is Rimbaud's "A qui me louer? Quelle bête faut-il adorer?" It is D. H. Lawrence's passion for "*other*ness," his hatred of pornography as the desire to "watch ourselves," his recognition that the love of self is finally the love of death. And the Christian who has pondered almost the same cry in St. Paul—"Who will deliver me from the body of this death?"—will be sufficiently moved by Miss Nin's piercing language throughout "Ladders to Fire" to contemplate, in her hall of mirrors, meanings far beyond the pathology of sex.

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There is no space here for a complete criticism. I should have liked to question, for instance, the proportions of "This Hunger'; the actress's story seems a little too long and not sufficiently complex to remain interesting; its best use would seem to be more economical, a mere statement of the theme of the image. From time to time, also, one suspects that Miss Nin's method of characterization begs the question: she states the disorder and then enumerates the symptoms. I am aware that sometimes this method can produce as much suspense as any other can, but its defect is apparent in the treatment of Jay, the man in the story: there is no development of Jay, only the multiplication of examples to demonstrate what the author has told us about him in the first place. There is, finally, a certain atmosphere of bohemian *chic* which does not yet but can diminish the intense humanity of Miss Nin's work; it is a danger which novels of this *genre* must run and which the author should try to provide against.

It may be just as well, however, not to be concerned at too great length with these small reservations. Since this is the book which one of the popular New York book-reviews called a "surrealist soap-opera," it is much more important to say that in the midst of the half-death represented by that review Anais Nin persists in an extraordinary art, and that among the merely living she is alive and expending her singular vitality in the pity and courage and nobleness of her work, not having exchanged the honest word for the neon phrase nor cheapened a life into a profession.

HENRY RAGO.

The Angelic Avengers. Pierre Andrézel. Random. $3.00.

IT IS NOW known that "The Angelic Avengers," first published in nazi-dominated Denmark in 1944 and signed with the pseudonym of Pierre Andrézel, was written by a woman who is one of the most gifted literary stylists of our time—Isak Dinesen. Each of her previous books achieved not only a good sale but a *succès d'estime*. In her "Seven Gothic Tales," in the melodious, moving account of her own experience called "Out of Africa," and in her most recent short story collection, "Winter's Tales," Isak Dinesen displayed the skilfully bridled imagination and the banked passion of a born writer. No one who read these books would be likely to forget their quality. "The Angelic Avengers," however, while akin to the rest of the author's work in exotic flavor, is a wild departure from the tone of high credibility established in her other books.

This is a tale with a twofold purpose, one side of which is revealed and the other hidden. On the surface, the author has obviously wanted to embroider the Hansel-and-Gretel motif of innocence in the toils of evil. The story concerns two young English girls of the nineteenth century born on the same day and linked in a schooltime friendship. Simultaneously stricken by ill-fate, the orphaned beauty Lucan, and Zosine, the spoiled darling of a papa who jeopardised his fortune and disappeared, go forth hand-in-hand to seek their livelihood. A certain Mr. and Mrs. Penhallow, reputed to be reticent and scholarly English folk, who live on a lonely farm in France, agree to adopt the two maidens for the space of a year, ostensibly to fill the emptiness left by the demise of a daughter. For the first few months this arrangement, despite the strange isolation which it entails, lulls the young ladies into gentle security. It is only months later that they begin to suspect and finally to unearth the stark skeleton dangling in the Penhallow family closet. Thanks, then, to a concatenation of coincidence which Isak Dinesen does not make plausible, Lucan and Zosine are saved from doom, and their virtue, this time scarcely a reward in itself, wins for them each a wedding. Thus ends what, taken even at its face value, is a far-fetched narrative.

Considerably more far-fetched, however, is the buried meaning. For, although no hint of it emerges from the writing, this is purported to be an anti-nazi fable. The two angelic avengers, Lucan and Zosine, are supposed to stand for the two Scandinavian victims of the Germans, while Mr. Penhallow represents a symbolic Hitler, and his household Hitler's friends. Apparently, therefore, the author intended her fantastic tale of struggle between innocence and evil with its final triumph for the unsullied victims as a call to hope, at least, if not to rebellion, for her fellow-Danes. Apparently, too, if the sale of the book in Denmark while the Germans were still in power is any index, the Danes understood Isak Dinesen's intent.

But for post-war Americans, the undertones of this book are so muffled as to be practically unheard, while the actual horror story, though unfolded with the author's customary magnetism, is too grotesque to be acceptable. There is a perversity about the whole atmosphere of "The Angelic Avengers," a kind of willful discarding of the props of probability which alone could hold up such improbable adventures, which tempts you to believe that Isak Dinesen has, in this instance, thrown her integrity to the winds. Whether the book was written as propaganda or out of some secret caprice, the author has managed to produce a caricature of her own kind of romanticism which, instead of being persuasive, makes mock of her past work.

VIRGILIA PETERSON.

The Stricken Land. Rexford G. Tugwell. Doubleday. $4.50.

THE "STRICKEN LAND" is Puerto Rico, and for some five years Rexford Tugwell was its Governor. Although providing the title, actually Puerto Rico is not the subject of this book. Our island territory is simply the back-drop against which a modern Saint George jousts with two formidable dragons: Congressional reactionaries at home, and hot-spirited *politics* in his insular bailiwick. There is more to the book, however, than the mere spectacle of a good fight. For one thing, it is an excellent case study in government. The author combines a scholarly grasp of the science of administration with the politician's ability to fuse theory and practice. He brings into sharp focus, too, the contrast between the humanitarian aims of the true liberal, and the self-seeking that so often cloaks itself under the name of conservative.

Since "The Stricken Land" is Governor Tugwell's personal *apologia*, it is natural that he should exhibit a well-developed sense of self-appreciation. It is also natural that his opponents should all appear as either venal or befuddled. But in spite of an occasional twinge of impatience with the author's self-complacency, I am convinced that he is sincerely a liberal in the best sense of the word. His objectives are honest objectives, even though he is not above a politician's conniving, as he frankly admits. At one time, when the President's Committee was considering plans for Puerto Rican sovereignty, and Rev. Raymond McGowan held the deciding vote, Mr.

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Tugwell was prepared to have the whole question declared out of order if Father McGowan could not be won over to his side. But in his brushes with Senatorial investigators, Congressional committees, and Island politicians, the Governor had need of deviousness if he were to meet his opponents upon their own ground.

Mr. Tugwell's style is literate, as might be expected from a college professor, yet it scarcely is more than adequate. The author uses subordinate clauses with an abandon that is tiring to the pursuing listener. He scatters pronouns with a profusion that makes it difficult to identify their subjects: e.g. "Until shortly before this he had favored, along with others, a solution short of this." Much that is trivial appears with much that is important in the course of "The Stricken Land's" seven hundred pages. These, however, are minor defects in a work that is certain to be a source book of New Deal history.

It is perhaps indicative of Puerto Rico's plight that Mr. Tugwell ends his book on a note of doubt and questioning. Finding himself in a secluded spot on the seashore he meditates: "It struck me that out there I might be able to re-create a plan and a policy; for all had become confused and chaotic in my mind. Perhaps I could see what lay ahead for Puerto Rico or what might lie ahead if all of us who were of good will conducted ourselves in accordance with wise prevision. But neither wind nor sea, sage nor orchid, solitude nor effort, yielded anything further. Before long, as most other men have done, I got hungry and came home. . . ." Mr. Tugwell came home to a professorship at the University of Chicago. Whether he came home with his shield or upon it only the sequel can tell. But that he fought a good fight, with a personal integrity that even his bitterest enemies could not impugn, is evident to anyone who knows anything of the stricken land. LEO J. TRESE.

Twice A Year. Fall-Winter 1946-1947. *Norman and Lescaze.* $3.00.

THE CURRENT fat (513 pages) issue of *Twice A Year* is in several senses a memorial. Since the previous issue, its patron saint, Alfred Stieglitz, has died, and so have three of its lesser idols, Theodore Dreiser, Paul Rosenfeld and Gertrude Stein; this issue, like all its predecessors, is dedicated to Stieglitz, with special tribute to those other three "valiant fighters for the modern spirit." The issue is also a memorial to an era which the publisher and chief editor, Dorothy Norman, considers to have come to an end; to clarify this era and thereby the coming period, "the material published in this issue goes back not only to the beginnings of the 'modern' movement, but concentrates also upon the beginnings of the crumbling of the modern world." The memorial sections contain, on the "personal" side, eulogies, reminiscences and characteristic work of the four named above; a collection of impressionistic letters by John Marin; and a sequence of poems by the editor. On the "impersonal side," Albert Camus discusses "The Human Crisis" and the Spanish civil war; Harry Slochower summarizes the early reactions to Hitlerism of Thomas Mann, whose diaries for 1933-34 are quoted at length in substantiation; the Jesuit missionary Father J. A. Siemes gives a first-hand account of the atomic bombing of Hiroshima; Julian Bach describes nazi experiments on "human guinea pigs"; a group of young Americans report their war experiences and impressions.

As in past issues, there are extended sections on racial discrimination, labor, and civil liberties. Most fascinating of many interesting reports and documents included in these sections is a long verbatim transcript of the October, 1945 wage-increase negotiations between the UAW (chiefly Walter Reuther) and General Motors Corporation (chiefly Mr. Harry Coen, "vice-president in charge of tear gas and baseball bat division").

In the remaining sections, there is the customary emphasis upon informal writing: selections from the journals of Clifford Odets, Angna Enters and Michael Fraenkel; fragments by the German romantic, Novalis. More formal creative work includes an extract from André Malraux's latest novel, "La Lutte avec L'Ange," stories by Niccolo Tucci and Ruth L. Yorck, a poetry section, and a dozen illustrations ranging from early anti-fascist drawings and photo-montages to an official USAAF photographic of the atomic bomb explosion over Nagasaki. To offset the breath-taking beauty of the congested artificial cloud effects of the latter, it is followed by a fresh, singing photograph of a summer sky by Stieglitz, epitomizing the antithesis of everything represented by the atomic bomb. DAVID BURNHAM.

Mainly on the Air. Max Beerbohm. Knopf. $2.00.

THIS LITTLE volume consists of six broadcasts which the author delivered over the BBC and of six essays. The broadcasts range in date from 1935 to 1945; the essays from 1920 to 1944. Running through most of the book is Max Beerbohm's tempered nostalgia for the palmier, balmier Georgian and Edwardian days of his youth and young manhood. The broadcasts suggestive in tone and manner of those delivered by the late Alexander Woollcott, allow us glimpses of an older and mellower London; of older and mellower statesmen; of older and mellower playgoing; and of older and mellower music halls. The mellowness is checked by Mr. Beerbohm, who never allows it to progress too far. They made good reading; they must have made delightful listening. Indeed, in a brief introductory note, Mr. Beerbohm says, "I would therefore take the liberty of advising you to read these broadcasts aloud to yourself—or to ask some friend to read them aloud to you."

In the second part of the book, "Other Things," are essays on such diversified matters as top hats and Einstein's theory of relativity. Weighed in Mr. Beerbohm's jolly balance, they seem about equal in density. The last two are the best: "Fenestralia" and "T. Fenning Dodworth." The former is a disquisition on the window, its value in painting, literature, and oratory. It contains a vignette of Degas wearing a red beret, leaning across a Parisian window sill. This is followed by a bit about Benjamin Jowett:

> Not perhaps a great, but certainly a gifted and remarkable man was Dr. Jowett, at first and last sight of whom, driving along the Broad in a landau, more than half a century ago, I, a freshman, experienced a mild thrill. How much less mild must have been the thrill vouchsafed to that part of visitors whom C. S. Calverley was showing over Balliol many years earlier! "There," said Calverley, "is the Jowler's window. "And," he added, having picked up a stone and hurled it at the window, "there is the Jowler."

"T. Fenning Dodworth," reminiscent of the portraits in "Seven Men," may well prove the most notable bit

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in the book. It is Beerbohm of the sort it has become a *cliché* to call "incomparable."

One puts down the book with a conviction that we have no other stylist in English his equal. Yet at the same time a feeling of dissatisfaction remains. What has this sensitive medium ever conveyed but the sort of trivia contained in this book? Are all his operas to remain minor ones? Where is the large effort? the stretch toward the philosophic end? It is courteous to allow the author final rebuttal. As though anticipating such comment, he says at the conclusion of his broadcast, "Music Halls of My Youth":

> Perhaps you will blame me for having spent so much of my time in Music Halls, so frivolously, when I should have been sticking to my books, burning the midnight oil and compassing the larger latitude. But I am impenitent. I am inclined to think, indeed I have always thought, that a young man who desires to know all that in all ages and in all lands has been thought by the best minds, and wishes to make a synthesis of all those thoughts for the future benefit of mankind, is laying up for himself a very miserable old age.

CHARLES DUFFY.

Ritual Psychoanalytic Studies. Theodor Reik. Farrar, Straus. $5.00.

NEW FIELDS of learning breed enthusiastic disciples. Enthusiasm coupled with sincere belief often results in attempts to project the theories inherent in a new learning into heterogeneous fields. Occasionally such projection is justified, often it is not. Unless the projector has specific training and understanding of the heterogeneous field as well as of his own, his dictum on such an applicability is questionable. The theories of psychoanalysis have added much to psychiatry and medicine. Because of this contribution it is unfortunate that some enthusiastic disciples of psychoanalysis have engaged in a scatter projection of psychoanalytical principles into many heterogeneous fields, one example being religion.

It is more unfortunate when so distinguished an analyst as Dr. Reik assures us in this book that "the scientific study of religion comprises a large number of problems *which cannot be solved without its* [psychoanalysis] ***help"*** **(italics mine); or that** "in the light of analysis it is possible to lay bare the motives which led to the origin of ceremonial," or that "the analytical understanding of the religious questions of Judaism should therefore throw light on the unconscious factors which have determined the nature and origin of Christianity."

Dr. Reik's book will be welcomed by those who believe as he does and who find that in the "light of analysis" religion and religious ritual become crystal clear. To others with understanding and training in religious concepts such solutions appear naïve and highly questionable.

ANNETTE C. WASHBURNE.

The Music of Tchaikovsky. Edited by Gerald Abraham. Norton. $3.75.

THIS is a serious and not wholly unsuccessful effort toward a Complete Tchaikovsky. It will interest musicians and students, since it is largely a technical examination, more than plain music lovers, of whom this reviewer is one. It is a symposium, mostly by English critics.

If we may lay aside the worth of the technical opinions—and this, of course, will not do the book full jus-

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tice—we may still find certain interesting impressions. The chapters on "The Songs," by A. Alshvang, a Soviet critic; "The Ballets," by Edwin Evans, and "Operas" and "Religious and Choral Music," both by the editor, seem the most appreciative and satisfactory. The fifteen pages on the man himself are simply a restatement of the better known facts of Tchaikovsky's life, in a chilly tone.

The chapters on the symphonies, works for solo instruments and other orchestral works are disappointing. These three commentators seem bent on producing a figure a cut above Johann Strauss, amazingly prolific (they seem to say), and somehow able to sway both the man in the street and some of the more lettered. One of these gentlemen is found in the hardly tenable position of comparing the unconventional form of the First Piano Concerto to the uneven structure of the cathedral at Chartres—but then a second-rate composer, he says in effect, cannot be allowed the liberties taken by the great builders with stone and mortar.

No, the Complete Tchaikovsky has not yet appeared. Not even Herbert Weinstock's monumental job will fully do. Let's see. Tchaikovsky died in 1893, Mozart in 1791. Alfred Einstein's "Mozart" was published in 1945. Perhaps in 2047 we will have a thoroughly satisfying book on Tchaikovsky, who must certainly be accepted, eventually, as one of the significant creative artists of the Romantic period. JOHN BRUBAKER.

City in the Sun. Karon Kehoe. Dodd. $2.50.

THIS fictionalized study of the problem of the Japanese-Americans is more sociological than it is psychological or literary. It is really the story of how a young American of Japanese parentage developed into a type headed dead for trouble. Coke went through all the harrowing experiences from the day he and his parents were forcibly wrested from their California home.

Much of this convincing book deals with life in Nisei internment camps, a subject which the admirable young novelist knows from her own war experiences. It is here that the sociological quality of her book is most evident. She focuses on such aspects as the racial distastes of some of the camp authorities, the constructive attitude of others and the tensions involved when one of the Caucasian members of the staff and a Japanese athletic instructor fell in love. Above all, how Coke and some of his contemporaries came to form gangs bent on little good. Coke lands in New York as a personal servant for an aging social worker and her dog. Alas, alack.

CONTRIBUTORS

James MONTGOMERY is the disguise for a man who wants to keep his name clear in the labor market of the Pacific Coast.
George F. SHELDON recently returned from a tour of duty with the OSS in the Far East, is studying at the University of Chicago.
Thomas MERTON, the well known poet, is a Trappist monk in Kentucky.
Horace REYNOLDS is a native of the Kanawha Valley and sends this article from Cambridge, Mass.
Francis X. CONNOLLY is head of the English Department of Fordham University and the chairman of the board of directors of the Catholic Poetry Society of America.
Henry PAGO is a poet and critic now teaching at the University of Chicago.
Virginia PETERSON reviews books for THE COMMONWEAL and for the *Herald Tribune* book section.
Rev. Leo J. TRESE is pastor of St. Patrick's Church, Carleton, Mich.
David BURNHAM is a novelist.
Charles DUFFY teaches at the University of Akron, Akron, O.
Annette C. WASHBOURNE, Ph.D., teaches at the University of Wisconsin in Madison.

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